

RECEIVED  
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

DEC 22 2005

APPLICANTS:	Richard A. Wilsak, Scott A. Roberts, Dean B. Comstock, Ronald Stefanski, George A. Huff	)	PATENT APPLICATION
APPLICATION NO.:	10/663,918	)	Group Art Unit: 1724
CONFIRMATION NO.:	2288	)	
FILED:	September 16, 2003	)	Examiner:
		)	Robert J. Popovics
FOR:	A SOLID-LIQUID SEPARATION PROCESS	)	Attorney Docket No.:
		)	37,512

## RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner  
for Patents  
Alexandria, VA  
22313-1450

In the Office Action dated September 26, 2005, the Examiner has filed a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C § 121, dividing the subject claimed invention into the following three groups:

ANY ADDITIONAL FEES REQUIRED  
CHARGE TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT  
NO. 01-0528

Opposing Force Species	Opposing Force
OF-1	Hydraulic
OF-2	Pneumatic

  

Displacement Fluid Species	Displacement Fluid
DF-1	Liquid
DF-2	Gas

  

Filtration Zone Species	Defined By:
FZ-1	Concentration
FZ-2	Pressure

The Examiner has omitted to designate specific claims of the subject application to the three Groups. Applicants thereby assume that Applicants are to make such designation; however, if this assumption is incorrect, please advise Applicants to the contrary.

For the purposes of provisionally electing claims as required under 37 *CFR* 1.143 and traversing the Examiner's restriction requirement, Applicants designate the claims as follows: (1) Opposing Force Species as Claims 17-22; (2) Displacement Fluid Species as Claims 1-16 and Claims 23-52; and (3) Filtration Zone Species as Claims 1-39 and Claims 50-52. Therefore, in response to the Office Action, Applicants provisionally elect with traverse the Displacement Fluid Species, and provisionally withdraw Claims 17-22 with traverse.

Attention is now drawn to Claims 1-16 and Claims 23-52. As claimed by Applicants, each of Claims 1-16, 23-39 and 50-52 recites a Displacement Fluid Species and a Filtration Zone Species. For example, Claims 1-16, 32-39 and 50-52 recite "directing a displacement fluid to the higher concentration zone." Stated otherwise, the recitation of "directing a displacement fluid to the higher concentration zone" is a common element throughout each of Claims 1-16, 32-39 and 50-52. In another example, Claims 23-31 recite "directing a displacement fluid into the higher pressure zone. Stated otherwise, the recitation of "directing a displacement fluid to the higher pressure zone" is a common element throughout each of Claims 23-31. Therefore, the Examiner's restriction

requirement based on the defined groups in the Office Action would improperly require Applicants to divide individual claims on an element-by-element basis and/or eliminate dependent claims in which Applicants are entitled too.

Attention is now drawn to Claims 17-22. As claimed by Applicants, each of claims 17-22 recites an Opposing Force Species and a Filtration Zone Species. For example, Claims 17 recites "imparting an opposing pressure on the slurry feed in the higher pressure zone." Stated otherwise, the recitation of "imparting an opposing pressure on the slurry feed in the higher pressure zone" is a common element throughout each of Claims 17-22. Again, the Examiner's restriction requirement the defined groups in the Office Action would improperly require Applicants to divide individual claims on an element-by-element basis and/or eliminate dependent claims in which Applicants are entitled too.

In view of the forgoing, the three groups defined in the Office Action are aspects of a single inventive concept. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn upon consideration.

Customer No. 04249

Correspondence Address:  
BP America Inc.  
Docket Clerk, BP Legal, M.C. 5East  
4101 Winfield Road  
Warrenville, Illinois 60555

Respectfully submitted,



---

Patrick J. Kim  
Attorney for the Applicants  
Registration Number 45,818  
(630) 821-2440